

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2446

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USDEL PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3220

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, VN

SUBJECT: JAPAN AND NORTH VIETNAM

REF: A. TOKYO 2127; B. TOKYO 2355

SUMMARY: FONMIN OHIRA AGAIN PUBLICLY IMPLIES POSITIVE
ATTITUDE TOWARD ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH DRV. DOMESTIC
POLITICAL INTEREST IN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS CONTINUES
TO BE HEAVY. END SUMMARY.

1. TOKYO PRESS REPORTS THAT, DURING INTERPELLATIONS AT UPPER
HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE MARCH 18, JSP DIETMAN MAEKAWA
QUESTIONED FONMIN OHIRA ON VARIETY OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES
INCLUDING VIETNAM. IN CHARACTERISTICALLY LEADING QUESTION,;
MAEKAWA ASKED WHETHER DISPATCH OF FONOFF DELEGATION TO HANOI
WAS PREMISED UPON INTENTION TO RECOGNITE AND ESTABLISH
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH DRV. OHIRA REPLIED THAT IT WOULD
BE CORRECT TO UNDERSTAND VISIT THAT WAY. MAEKAWA THEN WENT ON
TO STATE GOJ SHOULD ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH PRG. OHIRA
RESPONDED THAT THEJBEARE TWO REGIMES IN SOUTH VIETNAM, THAT
GOJ HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GVN AND THAT GOVERNMENT IS
NOT RPT NOT CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING CONTACTS WITH PRG.

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2. FONOFF FIRST SOUTHEAST ASIA DIVISION DEPUTY (HANABUSA) COMMENTED TO EMBOFF THAT, GIVEN CONTINUING POLITICAL INTEREST IN JAPANESE RECOGNITION OF HANOI, OHIRA COULD NOT VERY WELL HAVE REPLIED NEGATIVELY TO MAEKAWA' S QUESTION CONCERNING NORTH VIETNAM. HANABUSA SAID THAT FONOFF HAD NOT GIVEN FONMIN ANY NEW GUIDANCE IN FORM OF PROPOSED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON VIETNAM POLICY AND THAT GOJ' S POSITION CONTINUED TO BE THAT FURTHER DECISIONS ON RELATIONS WITH HANOI WOULD NOT BE MADE UNTIL AFTER FONOFF DELEGATION HAD SOUNDED OUT DRV' S VIEWS DURING VISIT TO HANOI.

3. MARCH 19 TOKYO SHIMBUN REPORTS CONTINUING EFFORTS BY VARIETY OF JAPANESE POLITICIANS TO ARRANGE VISITS TO HANOI FOR PURPOSE INTER ALIA OF DISCUSSING PROSPECTS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. REPORTEDLY, JSP UPPER HOUSE DIETMAN KANICHI NISHIMURA HOPES TO LEAD DELEGATION REPRESENTING SUPRA- PARTISAN ORGANIZATION FORMED IN 1972 CALLED DIETMAN' S DISCUSSION GROUP CONCERNING VIETNAM PROBLEM. ACCORDING TO PRESS, NISHIMURA HAS RECEIVED CABLE FROM TON QUANG PHIET, SECRETARY- GENERAL OF DRV' S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE, STATING THAT HE (PHIET) HOPED TO BE ABLE TO WELCOME NISHIMURA TO HANOI AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT WAS EXTREMELY BUSY AT PRESENT. TOKYO SHIMBUN REPORTS THAT LDP DIETMAN TAKEO KIMURA IS CONTINUING HIS EFFORTS (REF B) TO ARRANGE HANOI VISIT. IN ADDITION YOKOHAMA' S SOCIALIST MAYOR ICHIO ASUKATA ALSO HOPES VISIT HANOI AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF ASSOCIATION OF REFORMIST MAYORS IN JAPAN.

4. COMMENT: POLITICAL INTEREST IN FUTURE OF JAPAN- NORTH VIETNAM RELATIONS CONTINUES TO BE HEAVY. WHILE OHIRA' S RECENT MORE POSITIVE SOUNDING REMARKS CONCERNING RELATIONS WITH DRV (REF A AND THIS TEL) MAY NOT INDICATE ANY SHIFT IN GOJ POSITION, AFTER FONOFF DELEGATION RETURNS FROM HANOI IN APRIL, GOVERNMENT WILL COME UNDER CONSIDERABLE DOMESTIC PRESSURE TO DEFINE POSITIVE APPROACH TOWARD ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH DRV, PARTICULARLY IF FONOFF DELEGATION' S SOUNDINGS REVEAL, AS IS EXPECTED, THAT THERE ARE NO BILATERAL ISSUES BLOCKING MOVEMENT IN THAT DIRECTION.

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